

## Board Meeting Highlights

### Regular Meeting

July 15, 2009

At its regular meeting on July 15, 2009, the Board of Education of Pleasantdale School District 107...

- Calendar Waiver Hearing – Modification of State Board Rules and/or School Code Mandates  
Conducted hearing on renewal to modify School Code regarding observance of legal school holidays, specifically Lincoln's Birthday. One public/employee comment was asked regarding the observance of President's Day in lieu of Lincoln's Birthday. Board unanimously approved the Resolution to Approve the Modification Request as presented.

- Open Forum  
Heard from a parent who read a letter to the Board regarding her own personal experience with remedial reading in the district. She shared the history of her son and his reading instruction history. She supplemented her son's reading with the Wilson reading program for three years. She wished that the middle school would have had similar services that the elementary did and hopes that the Board will continue to expand programs currently offered at the middle school for remedial readers.

Heard from Kay Lewellyan, President of the Pleasantdale Teachers' Association (TAP), who commented on the letter received from the Board regarding retirement bonuses. She is disappointed that the Board will not offer retirement bonuses to the current retirees. Ms. Lewellyan feels that the incentive has only been offered to teachers that the board would like to see retire and is not offered as a reward for service.

Heard from a parent who is concerned about the reading program at the middle school. She expressed that she is not able to financially subsidize her son's reading education and hopes that there will be additional reading help available at the middle school next year.

Heard from a parent who suggested that parents be surveyed on whether their students are receiving outside tutoring.

Heard from a parent who addressed the Board regarding the comment Dr. Fredisdorf made when she was on the Board that students are not able to gain anything in reading when they get to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. She expressed that the Board should continue with reading remediation efforts.

- Consent Agenda  
Unanimously voted to approve the revised consent agenda consisting of: regular meeting minutes of May 20, 2009; special meeting minutes of June 16, 2009; regular meeting minutes of June 17, 2009; closed session meeting minutes of June 17, 2009; payment of June payroll/July warrants; establish petty cash fund: July 2009 personnel report; and declassify selected closed session minutes. Approval of Board Policy 4.44 was moved to the August meeting for consideration.

### Reports and Discussions:

- Pleasant Dale Park District Before and After Care  
Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who shared information regarding the request for the Pleasant Dale Park District before and after care program to be housed at the elementary school. Cindy Yelich from the Park District shared that the program was offered at the elementary for a three year period about 10 years ago. With the scenario of having it at the elementary, this would alleviate the need for transportation from the Chalet back and forth to school. Parents will be allowed to drop their children off as early as 6:45 a.m. If the

Board is not able to approve the change now, then the program will be offered at the Park District building for the upcoming year. Board Vice President Mark Mirabile requested that the Park be diligent in doing criminal background checks on all staff who work with the before and after care program. Only Pleasantdale residents will be allowed to attend the before and after school program.

- *Reading Lab/Workshop and Action Math Evaluation; and Recommendation to Implement Middle School Math Workshop*

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who shared information regarding the longitudinal data that has been collected on students in the reading workshop program. Dr. Fredisdorf explained the trend data for the current 11 students who graduated in 2009. Dr. Wick advised that four years of trend data are needed to determine if a program is successful. Dr. Fredisdorf addressed the comment that was made previously that he allegedly said no student can improve in reading after grade 5. He stated that in no way does he believe that to be true. The parent allegation was unequivocally false. There is no one method that works with all students to help with reading. Particular programs will work for students depending on their individual needs. Principals Matt Vandercar and Meg Pokorny work with the teachers and parents to address situations with each child and determine methods to be used. The school works with parents to help come up with ways for each child to succeed. A common deficit to overcome with students is lack of motivation to read. Board member Patti Essig commented that she has a student in this group and her student made remarkable improvements without any outside tutoring help. Her student couldn't pin point one specific thing that helped, it was the program as a whole. The Board reviewed the Gates Reading Comprehension NPR for students in the reading workshop for grades 1 to 8. Grade 1 students were added to the Reading Lab based on their DIBELS scores from Kindergarten. Next year, the middle school will have two teachers who will be working with the reading workshop students. Superintendent Fredisdorf is confident that the upward trend in reading scores will continue. There has been significant progress with the program based on Gates Reading Test scores. Principal Meg Pokorny explained the make up of the middle school reading workshop and expressed that students become better readers because they become motivated to read. Board President Leandra Sedlack questioned how we are documenting the strategies and tools that have been offered and used with students. Principal Matt Vandercar explained the brainstorming process that occurs for students at the elementary school who are struggling in a subject. A folder is started where the methods are recommended to address problems that students are experiencing. The folder is available on the district hard drive for current and future teachers to access. Anytime a new method is tried, it is documented. If the methods and interventions do not work after being used for a certain period, then the student may be referred for a special education evaluation. Board Vice President Mark Mirabile would like to see the district expand on its "tool chest" of materials that are available to the teachers. Regarding the middle school math workshop, Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf would like to implement a program that is very similar to the reading program for math at the middle school. It would be available for students who are struggling in math in lieu of Spanish class just as it is for reading students. Many students who struggle in math also struggle in reading. These students will participate in both math and reading workshop. The question of offering the math workshop before and after school was raised. Direction was given to Dr. Fredisdorf to survey the families to find out if they would be interested in a before, during, or after school program. Board President Leandra Sedlack asked if there are any options that are more consistent with our obligation to provide remediation. Superintendent Fredisdorf was directed to collect information about the preference of parents for the students eligible for math workshop.

- *Board/Superintendent Goals*

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who shared that he and Board President Leandra Sedlack reviewed the topics discussed at the Board Retreat and drafted the Board/Superintendent goals for the 2009-10 school year. Superintendent Fredisdorf explained that under the communication action plan goals, the outcome of action plan 1 will have an impact on the implementation of action plan 3. Curriculum action plans 2A and 3A are scheduled for implementation in 2009-10. Action Plan 3A will entail extensive effort to revise report cards. The Board will also work to negotiate a multi-year professional contract. Dr. Fredisdorf asked for two

Board members to volunteer to help with developing the structure of the finance committee. Board Member Rick Rigley questioned Board President Leandra Sedlack and Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf on whether it is feasible to complete all these goals in one year. Board President Leandra Sedlack suggested the Board review the implementation schedule in the middle of the year to modify the timeline as needed.

- Review Students (section 7) Board Policies

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who reviewed the changes in the Student section of Board Policy. All changes being recommended for approval by the Board at the August Board meeting were reviewed by the district attorneys for compliance with current laws.

- Review Conditions of Satisfaction for Remedial and Enrichment Program Document

Heard from Superintendent Mark Fredisdorf who reviewed the document format pertaining to remedial and enrichment programs. The document will describe enrichment and remedial programs offered by the district. The Board would like to see additional detail under some of the services available. The document is expected to be completed and available for parents in September 2009.

- Action Item

Unanimously voted to approve usage of the elementary school for the Pleasant Dale Park District before and after school program as amended. Motion regarding the recommendation for the middle school math workshop to take place during the school day failed by voice vote.

- Next Agenda

Items for the August Board Meeting: Approve Employee and Student/Parent Handbooks; Enrollment Report (written); Approve Board/Superintendent Goals; Tentative Budget; Review Personnel (section 5); Approve Students (section 7) Board Policies; and Review Curriculum and Instruction (section 6) Board Policies; Approve Board Policy 4:44; and Review/Approve Middle School Math Workshop.

- Open Forum

Heard from a parent who had a question regarding why there is a dedicated reading specialist at the elementary school but not the middle school. She suggested the middle school would benefit from a reading specialist.

Heard from a parent who asked whether different techniques are used for the students who are struggling when they are participating in the lab other than Orton Gillingham. She also asked if parents are able to access the information that is kept when brainstorming/interventions are being done with students.

Heard from a parent who shared that her student read three books this summer. She thought the district has a really a great summer reading program.

- Closed Session

Met in closed session (9:52 p.m. – 11:34 p.m.) to discuss matters relating to an individual student.

- Adjournment

Adjourned the regular meeting at 11:35 p.m.

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be  
Wednesday, August 19, 2009  
7:00 p.m. in the  
District 107 Administration Building**